

LDWF Employee **Bulletin**

Spring 2006, Vol 6, No.1



Louisiana Dept. of
Wildlife & Fisheries

L.W.F.F. SELECTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation is pleased to announce the selection of A. Kell McInnis III of Baton Rouge as its new executive director.

McInnis will be responsible for managing the foundation's activities, the development of programs and services consistent with the foundation's mission, and all fundraising efforts. He previously served as vice president and general counsel for Louisiana Generating, LLC and as secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. His active involvement both as a volunteer and in leadership roles with conservation-oriented organizations is well recognized.



The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation is a non-profit public, charitable foundation, tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The goals of the foundation include habitat conservation, environmental education and training, natural resource research and management, and general financial assistance to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries programs and projects.

SAFE BOATING WEEK MAY 20-26, 2006

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) is pleased to announce that Governor Kathleen Blanco has proclaimed May 20-26 as Safe Boating Week in Louisiana and the State Legislature has approved a resolution highlighting this important water safety event.

In Louisiana and across the nation, May 20-26 will be recognized as Safe Boating Week to remind boaters to practice safe and responsible boating by always wearing a life jacket and remaining alert on the water. Statistics show that nearly 70 percent of the boating fatalities in Louisiana are due to drowning and nearly 80 percent of those victims were not wearing a life jacket.

Send Bulletin submissions to: *Bulletin*, Public Information, La. Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries,
P.O. Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898 or sgardner@wlf.louisiana.gov. Use "Bulletin" as subject line.

L.D.W.F. Agent Honored By Veterans of Foreign Wars

The Department of Louisiana Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) honored Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Division Sgt. Darren Bruce from West Carroll Parish with a "Law Enforcement Officer of the Year" award on Jan. 28.

Bruce was one of three enforcement officers selected from various law enforcement agencies across the state for this prestigious award.

Law Enforcement Division Administrator Col. Winton Vidrine commended Bruce on his award. "Sgt. Bruce is a dedicated law enforcement officer and is respected throughout his community for his professional service to the public. We are proud to have him as one of our officers."

The award presentation occurred in conjunction with the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Mid-Winter Conference in Alexandria under the direction of VFW Commander Tom Kijak. Bruce had previously been honored as a Morehouse Parish Officer of the Year in March 2005 at the Bastrop VFW Post, which led him to the state competition.

Bruce is an eight-year veteran of the LDWF Enforcement Division and received the award for his outstanding service and job performance. VFW Junior Vice-Commander Clayton DeFreese Jr., VFW Post 2277 of Bastrop, presented Bruce with the award.

L.D.W.F. Agent Receives Federation Award

The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) Louisiana state chapter recently honored an Evangeline Parish Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Enforcement Division senior agent as their 2005 "Louisiana Enforcement Officer of the Year" on Jan. 28.

Senior Agent Scott Fontenot was presented with a plaque at an awards ceremony conducted at the NWTF state banquet in Marksville. LDWF Secretary Dwight Landreneau also attended the event and joined the NWTF in congratulating Fontenot.

Fontenot was nominated for his all-around achievements as a LDWF agent, with special emphasis on wild turkey enforcement. He patrols the Westbay Wildlife Management Area in Allen Parish, which holds a large population of turkeys that continue to thrive. He also oversees protection of a flourishing population of turkeys in northern Evangeline Parish, and has been successful in addressing problems with baiting violations. Sportsmen are reporting increasing populations of turkeys in areas where they have not been seen before.

Louisiana's NWTF state chapter annually recognizes a LDWF agent by soliciting a nominee from the LDWF Enforcement Division. Some of the criteria include professionalism, dependability, investigative skills and outstanding activities.

As the 2005 award recipient, Fontenot represented Louisiana at the 30th annual NWTF Convention in Nashville, Tenn. on Feb. 23-26.

Thank You!

As part of the nationwide celebration of Public Service Recognition Week (May 1 – 7, 2006), Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco proclaimed Wednesday, May 3, 2006, as State Employee Recognition Day in Louisiana to honor and recognize all state employees, who contribute significantly to the well-being and quality of life for all citizens of our state. This week also provided the general public an opportunity to learn more about their state government and to recognize all state employees.

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries with planning by the Employee Recognition Committee celebrated this week with several activities, including a department statewide meeting and luncheon for its employees, held on Tuesday, May 2. The luncheon, as well as other catering services during this week, were provided by LAWILFIE Credit Union and prepared by Ms. Jenny Mapes.



Janice Lansing and Senator Nick Gautreaux

At the meeting and luncheon, the department was honored to have Governor Blanco personally appear to express her appreciation to the department and its employees. Senator Nick Gautreaux also attended the luncheon and presented the Office of the Secretary, Enforcement Division, Office of Management and Finance, Office of Wildlife and the Office of Fisheries with framed Senate Concurrent Resolutions he had filed into the Senate honoring and commending the department for rescue and recovery efforts during hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Department presentations were also made by Secretary Dwight Landreneau, Undersecretary Janice Lansing, Assistant Secretary John Roussel and Deputy Assistant Secretary Brandt Savoie, who recognized the achievements and contributions of the department and expressed their appreciation to all of its employees for a job well done.



LDWF Administrators working hard to show their employees they are appreciated

Senator Gautreaux, Secretary Landreneau and Governor Blanco at the employee appreciation luncheon.

Guess Who's Coming for Lunch?

LDWF employees were honored May 2 at the Employee Recognition Luncheon in Baton Rouge with appearances by Governor Kathleen Blanco and Senator Nick Gautreaux. Both spoke about the major contribution made by LDWF staff during the recovery efforts following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Governor Blanco pointed out that congressional hearings in the wake of Hurricane Katrina found that LDWF was one of the few responding agencies to successfully accomplish their mission. And, the governor added, that was with minimal communication capability and in environmental and security situations that put employees at risk.

Senator Gautreaux related first-hand accounts of LDWF personnel in the storm recovery area working with little rest to move thousands of storm victims to safety. Gautreaux also presented each division with framed copies of resolutions he prepared for the current legislative session to honor LDWF post-storm efforts.



LDWF Agent Sgt. Rachel Zechenelly escorts Governor Blanco on her visit

Beyond B.O.W.

Beyond Becoming an Outdoors-Woman is a newly-created series of outdoor opportunities designed especially for women and features single topic learning and adventures. This program is an extension of the popular Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) program offered by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Hunter Education section.

Beyond BOW is an advanced program for women who have already completed a BOW course and want to become more active in the outdoors, learn new skills or hone skills they already possess, and enjoy the comraderie of other outdoor women.

The next Beyond BOW workshop is an advanced handgun, rifle and shotgun course. To qualify for the Beyond BOW workshop, interested applicants must have attended a BOW workshop in the past and have taken either the firearms and firearm safety class or successfully completed the hunter safety education certification course.

The next Beyond BOW workshop is scheduled for July 14-16, 2006 at the Woodworth Education Center in Woodworth. (approximately 10 miles south of Alexandria, La). The registration fee of \$80 includes all equipment, instruction, lodging and food. LDWF will select 18 applicants for this upcoming workshop.

Registration began May 22, 2006, and forms can be downloaded from www.wlf.louisiana.gov under the "Education" dropdown menu. The forms can be mailed or faxed to the address or fax number on the form and accompanied with a check or money order.

For more information contact Dana Permenter at 318-345-3912 or dpermenter@wlf.louisiana.gov.

LOUISIANA'S WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN RECEIVES FEDERAL APPROVAL FROM U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) has announced that the agency's Wildlife Action Plan -- A Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, was approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

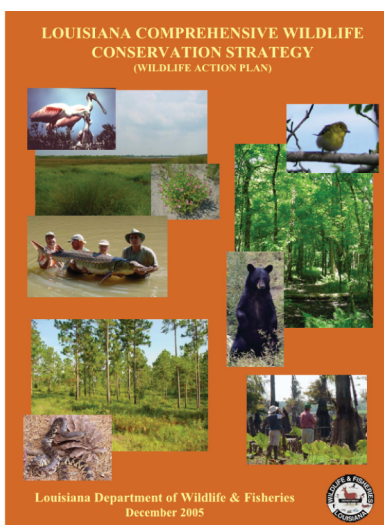
Future federal funding for State Wildlife Grants (SWG) was contingent on plan approval. LDWF's strategy was accepted in its initial submittal following a two year statewide planning process that concluded in 2005.

"The federal government made the commitment to the conservation of all wildlife species with state wildlife grant funding in 2002 and Louisiana's Wildlife Action Plan re-affirms the state's commitment to being a conscientious steward of the total resource," said Dwight Landreneau, LDWF secretary.

SWG funds are federal dollars derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and distributed by the USFWS, Department of Interior. The funds are distributed proportionally, based on each state's geographic and population size and provide for research and program solutions regarding wildlife species not hunted, fished or trapped. Annual SWG funding in recent years has averaged \$900,000 for LDWF programs and research.

State-level action developed by SWG fund use can prevent more species from becoming threatened or endangered – a designation that brings strict federal land and water usage regulation which restricts private property use and development.

"Our successes in non-game species recovery efforts prove the value of program funding in this area," said Gary Lester, Natural Heritage Program coordinator. "LDWF biologists had significant roles in the re-population of species such as the brown pelican and the Louisiana black bear, and recovery research on the pallid sturgeon."



The plan approved by USFWS details Louisiana's habitat value as a permanent or temporary home to over 900 species of vertebrate animals and an unknown number of invertebrates. Ecosystems from the diverse coastal marshes to interior pine-dominated landscapes are inhabited by a variety of wildlife including 24 million migrant songbirds on a typical spring day to five million waterfowl during an average winter. Over 200 rookeries for wading birds and seabirds are contained within the state's borders.

LDWF broadened its constituency base in the development of the action plan. In addition to continuing its relationship with hunters and fishermen, the department conducted outreach meetings with the Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, Louisiana Forestry Association, and all federal and state agencies with interest in natural resources.

More than 325 Conservation Actions or strategies were developed in seven focus group meetings held across the state with invited conservation organizations, forestry and wildlife associations, federal and state agencies, industry, universities and private citizens.

U.S. ARMY HONORS TWO L.D.W.F. EMPLOYEES

The U.S. Army presented awards to two Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Wildlife Division personnel at a ceremony at Fort Polk on March 31.

Leonard Bennett, wildlife technician, received a "Certificate of Appreciation" for his work with the military managing the wildlife resources on Fort Polk. Bennett also received the "James Brooks' Technician of the Year Award" from the National Wild Turkey Federation for his management work with wild turkeys on the Fort Polk Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Biologist Manager John Robinette accepted a "Commander's Award for Public Service" for his professionalism and dedication to the stewardship of Fort Polk's natural resources. Brig. Gen. Michael Barbero, who is the commanding general at Fort Polk, presented both awards.

Robinette is the Wildlife Division's Region 5 biologist manager in Lake Charles and oversees all wildlife management activities in southeastern Louisiana. Bennett is the Fort Polk WMA area supervisor. Robinette and Bennett, along with other Region 5 Wildlife Division personnel, were also heavily involved with restoration and recovery activities following the two hurricanes.

In return, LDWF's Wildlife Division presented a "Certificate of Appreciation" to outgoing Garrison Commander Col. A. Wade Woolfrey Jr. for his dedication and support in helping the department manage the wildlife resources for public recreational opportunities on the Fort Polk WMA. Col. Woolfrey was very instrumental in building the working relationship between the Army and LDWF. Fort Polk and LDWF has continued their working relationship with new Garrison Commander Col. David G. Sage when he took over the command May 2.

The Army and LDWF have developed a cooperative partnership in the operations and management of the wildlife resources which exist on the 145,000 acres of the military training complex known as Fort Polk and Peason Ridge. These military facilities are located mainly in Vernon Parish and were first established in the 1940s. Fort Polk's mission has been to train military troops during World War II, the Vietnam Conflict and Gulf Wars. Today, Fort Polk is the command center of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment Transformation and the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), which involves training military personnel for current assignments around the world.

About half of Fort Polk and Peason Ridge is owned by the Department of Defense. The other half is owned by the U.S. Forest Service, which leases their half to the U.S. Army for training. LDWF leases both areas from the U.S. Army for both Peason Ridge and Fort Polk WMAs.

The area habitat consists of rolling hills and sandy creek bottoms of mixed hardwood and pine timber. The area supports good populations of many species of wildlife, but is hunted mainly for deer and turkey. The area also supports the highest number of Red-Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) colonies in the state.

Region 5 Wildlife Division personnel have been working with the U.S. Army since 1994 to understand each organization's prospective mission and how to meet each other's goals in a cooperative manner. Over the past 12 years, an efficient line of communication has evolved among the U.S. Army, U.S. Forest Service and LDWF. Today, military training and the management of the habitats and wildlife species have merged to benefit the U. S. Army, U.S. Forest Service, LDWF and also the thousands of people who utilize these areas for outdoor recreation.

NEW DEER HABITAT BOOK IS NOW AVAILABLE FROM L.D.W.F

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) has published a new book that will teach landowners and hunting clubs about deer habitat in Louisiana.

Checklist of Woody & Herbaceous Deer Food Plants of Louisiana details the various food plants that contribute to sound deer management; and it was written by LDWF Wildlife Division Administrator David Moreland. To order a book, call LDWF 225-765-2918 or visit LDWF's library located at headquarters building at 2000 Quail Drive in Baton Rouge, open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on weekdays.

"The book is designed to introduce landowners and deer hunters to the deer food plants of Louisiana," Moreland said. "Hopefully they will begin to recognize and identify the plants that deer use for food, which will help them better manage their habitat for deer."

"This book started as a project in 1980 when we documented deer browsing on over 50 different plant species," Moreland said. "When I became the deer study leader in 1992, I began developing the format for the book. It has taken about five years to put the book together."

The book includes a habitat checklist to help landowners keep track of the quality and quantity of browse plants, a complete list of all the Louisiana woody and herbaceous plants, pictures and descriptions of the most significant Louisiana woody and herbaceous plants, explanation of browse surveys and how they help monitor deer herd growth and development, and how forage and orchard plantings can improve the deer habitat.

This book can also help non-deer hunters who want to improve their land for other wildlife species.

"Anyone who has an interest in deer or an interest in the habitat can benefit from this book," Moreland said.

"Deer can and do over browse native habitat, which creates problems for other wildlife species. This book will help landowners identify deer habitat problems and what to do to maintain or develop their habitat for deer or other wildlife species."

The book was designed in three ring binder form to allow for future updates concerning new plant species utilized as food or new information about habitat management work. The paper is both tear and water-resistant to withstand years of use in the outdoors. Copies are \$20 each plus tax and shipping, and all proceeds go to LDWF.

